

## **PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANTS**

*Eight communities to receive grants for downtown planning services*

BOSTON – April xx, 2012 – The Patrick-Murray Administration's Department of Housing and Community Development today announced \$70,000 in Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) grants for Norwood, Reading, Hingham, Beverly, Chelmsford, Woburn, Easton and Montague.

The grants will be used to help pay for these communities to further their downtown revitalization efforts.

"These grants are critical to supporting municipalities across the Commonwealth in their effort to breathe new life into their downtowns," said Undersecretary of Housing and Community Development Aaron Gornstein. "We will continue to invest in the revitalization of our communities to make Massachusetts a better place to live, work and do business for all residents."

The communities were chosen through a competitive application process. DHCD received a total of 26 applications in seven eligible categories, design, economics of downtown, parking, way-finding, housing, business improvement districts and creative economy. The following awards were made:

**Beverly:** \$10,000 to continue the creation of a Business Improvement District.

**Norwood:** \$10,000 for assistance to improve and revise the sign bylaw that applies to the central business district. The assistance will also be used to develop sign designs to be added to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

**Reading:** \$10,000 to create a retention program for retailers in the downtown area. The program will be modeled after the successful effort in the City of Lowell. Through workshops and one-on-one assistance, the town will assist retailers in improving their businesses.

**Chelmsford:** \$10,000 to conduct a market study to determine potential demand and suitable housing types within the Center Village. The assistance will support a public participation component to identify potential concerns.

**Woburn:** \$10,000 to create a parking management plan for the downtown area and identify steps for implementation.

**Hingham:** \$10,000 to develop a way-finding program to encourage visitors and residents to better utilize the downtown area. The program will direct visitors and residents to the center of town and improve utilization of local businesses and near-by transit.

**Montague/Turners Falls:** \$5,000 to assist the local town center initiative, River Culture, to develop a creative economy programming strategy to build on recent successes.

**Easton:** \$5,000 to develop a cultural district for the town center. The assistance will include identifying stakeholders and a strategy for attaining cultural district designation.

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